

THE OTOREKE YMCA SKI LODGE

A REVIEW

The Otoreke YMCA Ski Lodge was set up on its present site in 1945. Earlier, in 1940 at Ste. Adele, in 1941 at Piedmont, the Otoreke Committee had rented houses for use as winter lodges.

In 1945 the Committee recorded itself in favour of an Otoreke Ski Lodge . . . handy to the railroad, immediately upon ski-able hills, and away from towns.

Frank B. Peterson, Chairman of the Otoreke Committee, Bud Horton, an ardent skier, and C. J. McGerrigle, Executive Secretary of North Branch and also Director of Otoreke, sought out and recommended the site on Elder's Farm, Christieville. After renting the old house for two seasons, the committee recommended that the property be bought. A couple more years were to pass before clear title could be secured. When the deeds were cleared an addition was built housing a kitchen, washrooms, and extra sleeping quarters. The next year came the building of the house with sleeping quarters for men and the dining room. Later the front room was added.

HISTORY OF LODGE INCOME

1946	\$3213	1954	\$ 8278
1947	4506	1955	9006
1948	5254	1957	9114
1949	4907	1958	9484
1950	4722	1949	10,345
1951	5585	1960	9136
1952	8552	1961	6200
1953	6533		

EXTRACTS FROM 1954-55 REPORT

"The Ski Lodge opened Christmas Eve, closed Easter weekend. Snow conditions throughout the long winter were excellent. Skiers generally used the word 'fabulous' to express their feelings about skiing conditions as they found them from week to week.

Continued . . .

"Accommodation at the Lodge was improved greatly by an addition to the lounge. This new room became the card and reading room, while the old part remained as the TV Room.

"The membership numbered 143 . . . 74 men, 69 women (including 7 married couples). These members paid a \$5.00 membership . . . had first call on the weekend accommodation . . . enjoyed a slightly lower weekend rate than non-members.

"Members indicated branch affiliation as follows:-

	<u>Branch</u>	<u>Otoreke Plus Branch</u>
Otoreke	59	
Central	4	5
YWCA	6	1
College	3	
NDG	5	4
Westmount	1	3
Northmount	1	
Southwestern		2
Lachine		1
International		1
No YMCA -- 15 of these were newcomers to Canada	<u>47</u>	<u>—</u>
	126	17

<u>Weekend Attendance</u>	<u>Fri. Nite</u>	<u>Sat. Nite</u>	<u>Sunday Lunch</u>	<u>Ski</u>	<u>Instruction</u>
				<u>Periods</u>	<u>Persons</u>
Dec. 24-26	18	40	24	2	8
Jan. 1- 2	96	90	110	4	28
7- 9	64	84	100	4	36
15-17	60	84	105	4	53
21-23	72	94	112	4	46
Feb. 4- 6	64	90	99	4	41
11-13	48	64	80	2	8
18-20	64	92	108	4	36
25-27	64	94	110	4	28
Mar. 4- 6	72	96	112	4	20
11-13	56	64	80	3	14
18-20	64	92	112	4	18
25-27	40	64	72	3	16
Apr. 1- 3	40	56	72	1	4
8-10	40	74	86		

The 1960-61 season saw poor snow conditions. This should be remembered in the following comparison. The Otoreke Lodge was not alone in showing a falling off in income last winter.

	<u>1954-55</u>	<u>1960-61</u>
Membership	143	45
Other Visitors	360	195
Total Meals Served	8,999	4,434
Bed Occupancy	2,513	1,361
Income	\$9,006	\$6,200

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES 1947 - 1961

Cost of Property	\$8,500	Septic Tanks	\$4,000
Kitchen Addition	4,000	Furnace-Main House	1,200
Sinks and Tables	1,200	Hot Water Tank	150
Stove	600	New Wiring	500
Dining Room Addition	4,000	Men's House	5,000
New Lounge, Etc.	3,000	Furnace	800
Roof on Main Building	1,200	Washroom Equip.	400

TOTAL -- \$31,550

The purchase price of the property may have come from the Metropolitan Finance Committee. All other expenditures have been taken care of out of Otoreke Camp and Ski Lodge income.

NOTES

The membership fee was \$5.00 per season up until 1956. In that year the fee was raised to \$10.00.

Private cars now supply transportation to and from the Laurentians. When the committee case for buying the property was presented to the Metropolitan Board, the Director of Otoreke spoke of the "forest of skis stretching from the station gate away back to Jean Talon Street." One does not hear of ski "specials" today.

Montreal West & McGill Groups - The Montreal West High School Ski Club for five seasons has spent the Christmas holiday period at the Lodge. The average number for the party has been 45.

The McGill School of Physical Education has held its Ski School at the Lodge for four years. When the School Directress enquired about the Lodge, she said, "We would like accommodation where the bar is not the centre of entertainment hours."

The Autoroute has made a difference in the skiing habits of the occasional skier. More of these occasional skiers ski one day only . . . and return home. This is especially true when skiing conditions are not the best. It is a fact, too, that skiers with cars ski at one hill one day or weekend, and somewhere else the next.

The rope tows at Mt. Christie will be replaced by a T-Bar or Chair Lift shortly. The Autoroute will be extended through St. Sauveur and be within three miles of Christieville.

House and Shack Owners in the Laurentians have no difficulty renting their buildings for the skiing season. In the immediate neighbourhood of the Lodge, the houses are all rented by the end of October. Hereabouts the better houses are taken by families who pay \$500 - \$600 for the season. "Shacks" rent at \$350 - \$400. One shack which rented last winter had no inside toilet; one in St. Sauveur, which had no hot water tank, rented to six girls at \$500. One shack near the Lodge with no water supply at all has been rented for this season.

A Group (including several Otoreke campers) has been organized to weekend at different areas this winter. Plans call for visits to Jay Peak, Mt. Washington, Stowe, Mt. Tremblant, etc. Tremblant is the only area in Canada mentioned in their list of areas. To the question, "Why not spend a weekend at the 'Y' Lodge?" the answer was, "What with rope tows!"

The Friendly Home, which rented the house from John Elder for the summer in the years before we took over, continues to rent from us. The rent is \$300 . . . the same as paid to Mr. Elder.